



SUNSHINE CREW

Peer-to-Peer Wellness Mentors

Sierra High School (Continuation) • San Bernardino City Unified School District
Lighting the Way for Student-Led Mental Health and Wellness



Founded
2022

Members
60+

Meetings
Weekly • 1hour

Wellness
6 campaigns/year

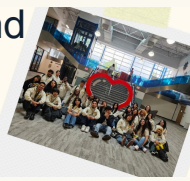
Setting
On-campus • Continuation HS

Section I: Introduction

Sunshine Crew is a student-led peer mentoring and wellness leadership program at Sierra High School in San Bernardino City Unified School District. Founded in 2022, the program grew from 15 to 60+ members and offers a welcoming space for connection, skill-building, and student-driven mental health promotion.

Mission

- Address unmet mental health needs through peer support and stigma reduction.
- Strengthen peer-to-peer connection, belonging, and help-seeking.
- Build leadership, communication, teamwork, and advocacy skills.
- Equip students to positively impact their school and community.



Site Context

- Continuation high school serving ages 16+ (grades10-12 and 5th-year seniors).
- School enrollment: approximately 400-450 students.
- Lead agency: Local Education Agency (LEA).
- On-campus program with linkage to the School-Based Health Centerand Wellnessupports.

Sunshine Crew in action at Sierra HS

Section II: Program Overview

Staffing

- Coordinator - Yesenia Ceballos (curriculum creation, ogram build, and oversight).
- Lead Facilitator - Paulina Gonzalez (event coordination; campaign planning and execution).
- Facilitators - Favio Lalalama & Kimberly Rivera (check-ins, attendance, events, academic support).

Services & Schedule

- Peer mentors and ambassadors meet weekly (1 hour).
- Peer-to-peer check-ins focused on connection, attendance, and academic support.
- Student-led wellness campaigns, events, and mini-fairs.
- Health education and resource navigation (referrals to campus and community supports).
- Digital storytelling: student-led PSAs and podcast/vodcast content.

Population & School

- We primarily serve 11th-12th grade continuation students.
- Open to all Sierra HS students with year-round (rolling) enrollment.

Youth Engagement

- Open enrollment - students can join at any time throughout the year.
- Student self-recruitment plus teacher, therapist, and counselor referrals.
- Tier 1, universal approach with an expanding peer-to-peer mentoring pathway.

Funding

- Currently funded through The Children's Partnership.
- Previously supported through school funding.

Location

On-campus at Sierra High School (Continuation).



Section III: Program Strength

Our approach combines universal, student-led wellness campaigns with structured, skills-based peer mentoring. Sunshine Crew is embedded within Sierra's whole-student wellness ecosystem, making support visiblenormalized, and accessible.



Whole-Student Wellness Lens

Academic • Emotional • Physical • Mental • Social • Financial

Core Training (All Members)

- SUP & TUPE (Substance Use Prevention / Tobacco Use Prevention Education).
- Teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA).
- CBT-informed coping and communication skills.
- Youth Advocacy 101.
- Six annual wellness campaigns led by students.

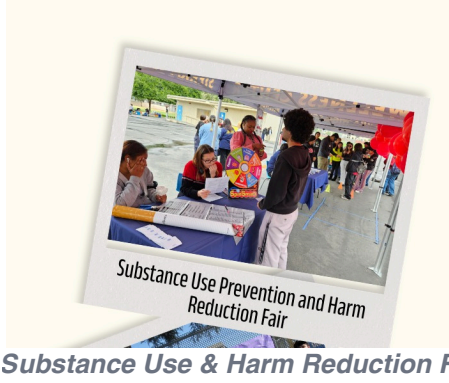
Peer Mentor Track (Peer-to-Peer)

- TIPS training (Teach It, Plan It, and Simple): stress reduction, problem solving, assertiveness, and communication.
- Peer mentors hold caseloads and provide regular one-on-one check-ins.
- Mentors document progress and connect peers to supports when needed.
- The structure mirrors Tier 2 check-in teams for accountability and continuous improvement.

Note: TIPS=Teach It, Plane ,and Simple(skills-based coping & communication training).

Student-Led Campaigns & Events

Students lead six annual wellness campaigns and create PSAs. Represent Sierra HS at SLAC.



Substance Use & Harm Reduction Fair



SuicidePrevention Awareness

Impact & Outcomes

StudentReflection Survey(n=44):percent who agreed or strongly agreed (4-5).

95%

School feels more positive

93%

Lessons used outside school

93%

Makes a difference for others

91%

Helped me grow as a person

Growth & Reach

- Founded in 2022 and expanded from 15 to 60+ student leaders.
- Six wellness campaigns each year plus PSAs, events, and leadership opportunities.
- Peer mentors build protective factors: connection, coping skills, and help-seeking.

Community-building and belonging strengthen wellness

Student voice:

"I felt incapable. Now, I feel anything is possible."

Section IV: Power of Partnerships

Sunshine Crew thrives through shared leadership between students, school staff, and community partners. Partnerships expand services, strengthen referral pathways, and bring prevention and care directly to campus.



Key Partners

- Funding & implementation support: The Children's Partnership (pilot grant).
- Evaluation and TIPS consultant: Dr. Maya Boustani.
- Media production coaching: Children, Youth, and Community (CYC) - including podcast expert Roberto Gonzalez.

Integrated Campus Wellness Ecosystem

- Mental & behavioral health:on-campus clinicians (APCC, AMFTs) + Loma Linda University doctoral interns + Partners Against Violence + psychiatry referrals.
- Physical & preventive care: Hazel Health telemedicine; dental (Healthy Teeth 4 Kids); insurance navigation (IEHP); vision (Lestonnac); mobile medical/dental units.
- Basic needs: Olive Branch Resource Center (food, clothing, diapers); food distribution (CAPS, Bienestar); IEHP washer/dryers; CHEWS health promotion.

What Makes It Successful

- Student voice drives priorities; adults remove barriers and open doors.
- Co-hosted events and warm handoffs make services visible

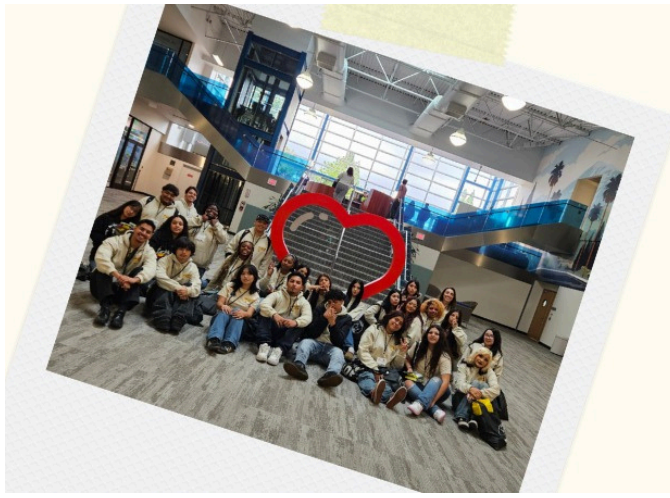
Student Voices

"It brings hope and reminds people to keep going, even when the days are tough."

"Sunshine Crew has meant to me. My mental health has improved as I continue to be part of it."

"Before joining, I felt lonely & not that proud of myself. Now, I feel like I have people I can trust around me and a support group."

"I'm grateful to have a safe place to talk about mental health and learn how to support others."



Replicable Strategies

- Recruit fromcouncils/clubs/advisories+keep open enrollment
- Create a visible wellness space on campus.
- Run low-cost campaigns (posters, PSAs, mini-fairs).
- Train peer ambassadors and peer mentors (students supporting students).

The Shine Line Podcast/Vodcast



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